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10 January 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: Report of Trip to Westover AFB, 9 January 1962

1. My trip to Westover was for the purpose of becoming familiar with the AFSPPL (Air Force Satellite Photographic Processing Laboratory) to compare the quality control of processing of film with that of Eastman and to compare equipment.

2. The party I travelled with consisted of [redacted] 25X1 25X1 [redacted] We were met at Westover by Col. Harold Ohlmaier, the Commander of AFSPPL. The presentation by Col. Ohlmaier was outstanding throughout the day. We were shown the whole laboratory, including the processing plant, the Research and Development Department, and the communications facilities.

3. The whole project appeared to be extremely well organized. Being directly under the Secretary of the Air Force, it probably enjoys freedom from the red tape it would be subjected to under a chain command such as SAC or TAC. The group is well informed on most subjects relative to satellite photographic processing and eager to learn more. All personnel are chosen by the Commander on an individual basis and once on board cannot be re-located by Air Force without his approval. This appears to me a step in the right direction to keep skilled personnel on board for some time beyond their initial training period.

4. Lt Col. Williams headed up the R&D section and gave us a nice presentation on current projects in R&D. Most of these projects were directed toward improvement of film resolutions and the accurate determination of resolving power of a film using a system which would be universal in the intelligence community. He had several common pieces of equipment used for micro-measurements which were shown to us, also the results of a new machine under development by Dayton Systems Incorporated under contract at Wright-Patterson AFB. The apparent improvements were the capability of measuring particles of at least one-tenth as small as any measured heretofore (up to 400 lines per mm.) and

the ability to measure a large area of film or the original of a large roll at any place on the film roll without having to cut the film.

5. Another project under study is the search for the source of foreign particles imbedded in the film. Some of these particles were of considerable size but could have been picked up at any stage after manufacture; i.e., during magazine loading, during exposure, unloading of magazine, processing, packaging after processing, etc. Considerable effort is made at Westover to keep the air free of foreign particles. Micron dust counters are used, micron filters are used on air systems and several film cleaners are used.

6. Though much of the equipment installed at Westover is from Eastman, I noticed most of it had been modified to one degree or another. Several of the processors have supplementary pumps for greater efficiency; one processor had been converted to process film either by immersion or spray method. One of the Log-3 printers had the complete dodging equipment removed and was being used as a high speed printer only. The light source had been intensified to permit a more rapid printing rate. I had not been determined how the increased light source affected resolution and I did not ask. It has been my experience in the past that when the manufacturer's light source is increased some loss of definition is evident due to diffusion by molecular diffraction through the film's granular structure.

7. Westover does not have a modern printing capability. I understand the machines are at Eastman and can be given to Westover some time in the future. To produce second generation materials of the quality Eastman now turns out, they will need the Eastman printers.

8. All in all, I considered the trip to be an excellent one, very informative, and encouraging. By encouraging, I mean in my opinion there should be another facility other than the Rochester plant capable of producing the finest product possible commensurate with the state of the art. This facility is not only needed as a back-up in an emergency but to handle an overload which could occur in the near future, and to even be competitive with Eastman on turning out a better product. It would be interesting to compare in the future the products from Eastman and Westover were each of these two facilities to be given half a "take".

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9. In conclusion, Westover does not now have the capabilities that Eastman has and will not for some time to come. Nevertheless, the potential is there and with some encouragement from the Community could be made into a highly sophisticated processing plant. I doubt if the rigid requirements we levy upon [redacted] at times calling for speed-ups in processing and the like could be worked out with Westover if the community were to demand such a time schedule as they presently enjoy. 25X1

10. I would like to recommend that Messrs Reber, Lundahl and [redacted] the facility at their earliest convenience, along with [redacted] to the obvious improvements in the facilities since [redacted] last visit in 1961. 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

[redacted]
Intelligence Staff 25X1

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